

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF OKLAHOMA ABANDONED DRILLING AND PRODUCTION SITES

Public education/outreach activities

PARTNERS

Oklahoma Energy
Resources Board
Oklahoma City, OK

MAIN SITE

Oklahoma City, OK

Background/Problem

The Oklahoma Energy Resources Board (OERB) is responsible for identification and remediation of abandoned oil and gas exploration and production sites in Oklahoma. OERB administers a voluntary assessment of one tenth percent on the sale of oil and natural gas produced in Oklahoma. An important part of one of the OERB mission goals is to provide public outreach on the importance of the domestic oil and gas industry.

Project goals have been to characterize environmental problems at abandoned oil and gas sites by conducting environmental assessments of abandoned drilling and production sites and to transfer environmental clean-up technology to the oil and gas industry, to develop public education materials so that the DOE can help implement similar programs in other states, and to assist in development and implementation of energy education and safety programs which can be transferred to other states.

Problem Description/Accomplishments

The continuance of elevated oil and gas prices into 2001 has allowed the OERB to maintain an aggressive environmental restoration program. As of May 2001, approximately 50% of the OERB's budget was utilized to restore sites. By December 2003, 5,000 sites had been cleaned up in Oklahoma. In addition, the OERB restored over 200 sites under a joint restoration program with the Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Coast Guard and the Oklahoma Corporation Commission on orphaned and abandoned well sites located near Lake Oologah Rogers and Nowata Counties, Oklahoma).



Oilfield site before restoration.



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Educating students about the dangers of playing around oilfield equipment is one of the most important things the OERB does. OERB developed a five-minute safety video and distributed it to every school in the state. Fossils to Fuels is a hands-on six-week program for elementary school students, and Petro Active is a six-week program for middle school students delivering information on formation and recovery of oil and gas.

Benefits/Impacts

The Department of Energy's contribution of \$200,000 per year over 5 years was to assist in the initial establishment of OERB's site remediation and education program. The principal funding for OERB's projects comes from the Oklahoma Voluntary Tax, a one tenth of 1% royalty on oil and gas production in Oklahoma.

Since the Program's inception, over \$20 million has been spent restoring sites in 59 of 77 Oklahoma counties at no cost to landowners.

Over 1,200 elementary teachers across the state have been trained in the Fossils to Fuel energy curriculum. More than 64,000 Oklahoma students were impacted by OERB sponsored curricula or programs during the 2000-2001 school year. In 2001-2002, OERB implemented xploration.com, a new student education website complete with learning tools, safety messages, research materials, science fair projects and scholarship and career information.

The Ohio Energy Education Program and the Illinois Energy Education Program have developed oilfield safety programs using the OERB program as a model.



Oilfield site after restoration.

OERB's motto is "Restoring faith as we restore the land".

CONTACT POINTS

Mike Terry

Principal Investigator
Oklahoma Energy Resources
Board
Phone: (405) 942-533
E-mail: met@oerb.com

John Ford

Project Manager
U.S. DOE
Phone: (918) 699-2061
E-mail: john.ford@netl.doe.gov

Dan Gurney

Scientific Advisor
U.S. DOE
Phone (918) 699-2063
E-mail: dan.gurney@netl.doe.gov

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST

\$1.0 million

COST SHARING

DOE - \$1.0 million
Oklahoma Voluntary Tax

WEBSITE

www.netl.doe.gov